

## Message Text

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PAGE 01     SEOUL 10289 300830Z  
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01  
ACDA-07 IO-13 /076 W  
-----300833Z 029089 /21

P 300813Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1294  
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY  
CINCPAC HI PRIORITY

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EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR PINT KS US  
SUBJ: KOREAN REACTION TO CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

REF: SEOUL 10245 290845Z DEC 76

1. ON DECEMBER 30, PRESS COVERAGE OF CURRENT ROK-US PROBLEMS WAS SHARPLY REDUCED FROM THAT OF PREVIOUS TWO DAYS. PRESS REPORTED BRIEFLY ON AMB.HAM'S INTERVIEW WITH NEW YORK TIMES DECEMBER 28. TONGA ILBO CARRIED SHORT PIECE REFLECTING "GOVERNMENT SOURCE'S" THOUGHTS ON STRENGTHENING DIPLOMACY BY "CLEANING UP THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SYSTEM". TONGA SPECULATED THIS WILL MEAN END OF "BEHIND-THE-SCENES DIPLOMACY." GOSSIP COLUMNS REPORTED NDP SUPREME COMMITTEE CRITICIZED YI CHOL-SUNG FOR UNIFICATION COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT'S ACTION, AND WAS UNABLE TO AGREE ON PRESS RELEASE. CHOSON ILBO ALSO REPORTED FONMIN PAK SPOKE TO REPORTERS DECEMBER 29, REFLECTING THAT 1976 DIPLOMACY HAD GONE SMOOTHLY UNTIL RECENT ISSUES AROSE WITH U.S. ASKED IF HE DIDN'T BELIEVE COMPROMISE HAD LEFT PROBLEMS UNRESOLVED, PAK SAID DIPLOMACY OFTEN REACHES NO DEFINITE CONCLUSION, BUT CONTINUED THAT AMBASSADOR SNEIDER  
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AFTER SEEING ROKG STATEMENTS SAID MATTERS HAD BEEN TREATED "SOFTLY."

2. IN LENGTHY FEATURE ARTICLE ON MAJOR EVENTS OF 1976, HAN'GUK ILBO, WITHOUT DIRECT REFERENCE TO ROK-US PROBLEMS, NOTED THAT "CARTER'Z MORALITY HAS GIVEN WORLD

LEADERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE THEIR OWN POSITIONS FROM THE MORAL POINT OF VIEW...CHILE'S RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE, IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS."

3. POPULAR REACTION TO ROKG'S ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING "PENDING PROBLEMS" VARIED WITH SOPHISTICATION OF AUDIENCE. MANY OF THOSE WHO KNEW OF CASES HOLD THAT ROKG WAS FORCED BY LARGE NUMBER OF RUMORS TO GO PUBLIC; THOSE LESS POLITICALLY AWARE WERE SURPRISED AT EXISTENCE OF PROBLEMS, AND SOMETIMES CONFUSED AS TO THEIR MEANING. SOME OF EMBASSY'S CONTACTS HAVE NOTED THAT MANY KOREANS BELIEVE PAK TONG-SON MUST HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR ROKG AND ASSUME US CIA COULD HAVE BUGGED BLUE HOUSE RATHER EASILY. SEVERAL SOURCES REPORT PEOPLE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE USG HAS NOT COOPERATED SUFFICIENTLY IN KIM SANG-GUN CASE, BUT POLITICALLY SOPHISTICATED, CITING PRECEDENTS, DO NOT DOUBT KIM DEFECTED OF OWN FREE WILL.  
SNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLITICAL ASYLUM, INTELLIGENCE PERSONNEL, PRISONERS RELEASE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 DEC 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** morefirh  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976SEOUL10289  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760475-1191  
**From:** SEOUL  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t1976123/aaaaaciw.tel  
**Line Count:** 80  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 SEOUL 10245  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** morefirh  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16 MAR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <06 APR 2004 by morefirh>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** KOREAN REACTION TO CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINT, KS, US, CI, (KIM SANG-KEUN)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006